

Lifegroup notes from Sunday 25 September 2022

Reading: Joel 2:12-32

We are catching the ripples of these prophetic words; dropped into human history like pebbles into a pond, they continue to speak to us in 2022, and become an immediate “now” word for us if we pay attention to the Spirit.



We know very little about Joel. His name may be a prophetic word in itself as it means “Yahweh is the Lord” Jo (Yahweh) El (the Lord). We know his father’s name, but that doesn’t help us much as nothing is recorded elsewhere about him. It seems that in a similar way that Hosea was primarily addressing the Northern kingdom of Israel, Joel addresses Jerusalem and Judah in the south. It’s most likely that he was prophesying at the time just before the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile to Babylon 586BC.

3 three ripples for us to catch.

1. Like Hosea last week, there is a call to move beyond religious activity to whole-hearted devotion. Don’t just rend your garment in grief, rend your hearts, move from the outward display to the inner discipleship. There is a call we need to hear today to the life of unceasing prayer and praise. We too often live compartmentalized lives, but our whole life need to be the outworking of our worship and devotion.

2. The locusts were a metaphor for the series of invasions that had shaken the Northern kingdom, and had now caught up the southern kingdom. Invasion after invasion had stripped the land of its wealth and power, as well as its resources. God’s promise was that a day would come when He would restore all that had been taken, once they had returned to God, and come back to the land. These last years have felt like things have been striped away. As a church, and a family, and in our own families and as individuals we have suffered many and various losses. I believe we are entering a season where God wants to be adding back to us, resources, influence, health, opportunity. I believe a biblical understanding of prosperity is to have enough to meet your needs and the needs of those God sends your way. That’s the prosperity I believe He’s calling us to enter into first in prayer then in action as we follow His lead.

3. Finally, we are utterly dependent on the Holy Spirit. This prophetic word began to be fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. Peter refers to these verses to explain the signs and wonders people were seeing. I believe God is challenging us about living for too long in a way that is reliant solely on our abilities and capacities. The life of faith is the spirit filled life, and requires our daily constant infilling by the Spirit so we have the power to live the lives God wants. I believe we are in a season where God wants us to seek a fresh anointing and empowering.

Some questions

- What encouraged or challenged you in this message?
- How can we ensure we too avoid the empty religious life (again! We need the repeat!)
- What are the things you or we have lost in the last few years? What might it look like for God to restore the years the locusts have eaten?
- What difference does the Holy Spirit make to us?
- How can we develop ways of making sure we follow Paul’s guidance “be being filled with the Holy Spirit”?
- What would revival look like?